To the Inhabitants of Plymouth.

CWP21 g.40/29

My Fellow Townſmen.

TO enable all the different Members of a great Community to act together with the fulleſt Effect in any Emergency, it is abſolutely neceſſary that ſome uniform Plan of Proceeding ſhould be univerſally and exactly adopted. Various Plans may in themſelves have equal Merit, but at the ſame Time be inconſiſtant with each other in Practice, and cauſe much Confuſion.

It muſt be remembered too, that the Arrangement of every important Scheme of Action is a Chain of many Links mutually related to each other and to the Whole, and muſt be accepted, not partially, but all together.

The preſent national Exigency has called for an Act of Parliament adapted to it: and, that the Purpoſes of the Act may be anſwered in the beſt Manner poſſible, a Plan for carrying its Proviſions into Execution, ſuggeſted and publiſhed by Authority, and very generally adopted by the Civil Power in the ſeveral Counties, has been recommended to the Acceptance of every ſubordinate Diſtrict. The Line of Conduct which it points out is drawn with a maſterly Hand; and a prompt and exact Conformity to it, which its Prudence juſtifies, will, with ineſtimable Advantage at this critical Moment, blend all the Parts of this great Kingdom into one uniform Body, actuated by one uniform Mind.

The Armed Aſſociation which that Plan recommends has been carried into very general Effect, and, I truſt, that our Patriotic Union to repel the Inſults of the Enemy, will be his Signal for Deſpair. Yet, as the Plunder of this rich and fertile Iſland is ſo tempting a Bait to his Rapacity, and the Conqueſt of it to his Ambition, his frantic Project of Invaſion is not to be ſo deſpiſed, as to occaſion any Relaxation in our Diligence to provide againſt it; and we cannot therefore too zealouſly adopt thoſe other Aſſociations which are wiſely recommended to us, as relative Parts of the ſame Plan of Defence.

1.—One of theſe Aſſociations is that of a Corps of Guides, whoſe Office requires an intimate Acquaintance with the Diſtrict in which they ſerve; and eſpecially, as to all its Roads and Paſſages from Place to Place. Offers of Service may, no doubt, be properly made to the Committee at the Guildhall.

2.—Another Aſſociation is of Artificers and Labourers to form a Body of Pioneers, whoſe Aſſiſtance is of ſo much Importance to the National Defence, that their Numbers can hardly be too great; and they ſhould give *early* Notice of their Wiſhes to ſerve their Country in this Department.

3.—Another Aſſociation is of the Owners of Waggons, Carts, and Draught Horſes, engaging for a regular Supply of the ſame for his Majeſty's Service.

4.—A fourth Aſſociation recommended is that of the Proprietors of Cattle, for the very important Purpoſe of driving the ſame out of the Reach of the Enemy.

5.—A fifth is the Aſſociation of Bakers, engaging for ſuch Supplies of Bread as may be within their Power.

6.—An Aſſociation of Millers for the ſame indiſpenſible Service.

Printed Forms of Promiſe and Engagement, ſpecially appropriated to theſe ſeveral Claſſes of Aſſociators, and to be reſpectively ſubſcribed by them, have been ſent to the ſeveral Diſtricts, with the Plan of Defence, and may be ſeen at the Guildhall. And it ſeems, indeed, obviouſly expedient, that ſuch *Engagements* ſhould be duly *authenticated* by the Signatures of the Individuals who compoſe the reſpective Aſſociations. Particularly it muſt be remarked, that this Meaſure is the more expedient with Reſpect to the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th Aſſociations, becauſe many Perſons of *Diſcretion* and *Ability*, and a few of *good Capacity and Skill in Buſineſs*, muſt be veſted, by the reſpective Aſſociations, with *full Powers* to act as *general Truſtees*, for the collective Intereſts of their ſeveral Claſſes, under the Titles of Directors of Cattle, Conductors of Waggons, &c. and *preſiding Agents* to receive and execute the Orders of the General Officers or Commiſſaries, and at the ſame Time faithfully attend to the Intereſts and Concerns of the Aſſociators. Theſe Appointments ſeem too important to be made without due Advice and Conſultation. It ſhould ſeem, therefore, that each of thoſe ſeveral Claſſes (3d, 4th, 5th, 6th,) ſhould reſpectively meet for the Purpoſe of regularly and authentically arranging their own Departments; the Buſineſs of which may be afterwards managed by ſuch *intelligent, diſcreet, and authorized* Directors, Conductors, and preſiding Agents, communicating with the Civil or Military Power.

I obſerve in the Committee's Publication of the 15th Inſtant, that they could not then compleat the Returns for this Town, to the Lieutenancy of the County, and, probably, their Meeting, next Tueſday, may have that Completion in view. If the Meetings of the 3d, 4th, 5th, and 6th Aſſociations could previouſly take Place, and the Subſcription Papers of each be duly ſigned, and the requiſite Appointments made, the Committee would, no doubt, gladly receive the Communication of that perfect Arrangement, at their Tueſday's Meeting.

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Excuſe theſe Hints, my Fellow Townſmen, from a plain Man who wiſhes well to you and his Country.

May 18, 1798.